UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/683
22 August 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 22 AUGUST 1996 FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

The members of the Security Council have asked me to write to you regarding the situation in Afghanistan. The members of the Council remain deeply concerned about the ongoing civil war in Afghanistan, its effects on the region and particularly the suffering of the civilian population. They express their strong view that the warring parties should renounce the use of force and settle their differences by peaceful means, through negotiations.

The members of the Security Council are convinced that the main responsibility for finding a political solution to the conflict lies with the parties and that all States must refrain from interference.

The members of the Security Council reiterate their full support for the important work of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan, headed by Mr. Norbert Holl. They hope that this work will intensify further and will bring new results in promoting the peace process. They would appreciate your keeping the Council informed about ongoing developments, both on the ground and in United Nations efforts, and they look forward to being briefed by Under-Secretary-General Marrack Goulding upon his return from the region. The members of the Security Council would also welcome a briefing by Mr. Holl when he comes to New York.

The members of the Security Council are convinced that the United Nations must continue to play a central role in international efforts towards a peaceful resolution of the Afghan conflict. They take note of recent proposals to promote a peaceful settlement, including a proposal for an arms embargo, as contained in the letter of 23 July 1996 from the President of Uzbekistan to the President of the Security Council (S/1996/607, annex). The members of the Security Council have started to discuss these proposals, taking into account all aspects of the situation in Afghanistan. They will remain seized of the matter and would hope that Under-Secretary-General Goulding and Mr. Holl, on the

basis of their consultations with the Afghan parties and the Governments of neighbouring States, will be able to make important contributions to the deliberations of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Tono EITEL
President of the Security Council

UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/684
22 August 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

EIGHTEENTH PROGRESS REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN LIBERIA

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1059 (1996) of 31 May 1996, by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) until 31 August 1996 and requested me to keep it closely informed of the situation in that country. The present report provides an update on developments in Liberia since my report of 21 May 1996 (S/1996/362) and contains recommendations concerning the future role of UNOMIL in Liberia.

II. POLITICAL ASPECTS

2. It will be recalled that on 7 May 1996, during their meeting in Accra, the Foreign Ministers of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) adopted a Mechanism for Returning Liberia to the Abuja Agreement and indicated that the ECOWAS Heads of State would take a decision, at their forthcoming summit, on the future role of ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in Liberia. This decision would be based on progress made in the implementation of the Accra Mechanism, which included, inter alia, the following steps: an immediate cease-fire; the simultaneous withdrawal of fighters from and deployment of ECOMOG in Monrovia; the removal of arms from the city; the return of vehicles and other equipment looted from UNOMIL, the United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations; the re-establishment of the authority and cohesiveness of the Council of State; the revitalization of plans for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and the settlement of the issues involved in the return to Liberia of General Roosevelt Johnson, the leader of a wing of the United Liberation Movement for Democracy (ULIMO-J).

3. The initiatives taken by ECOWAS led to the restoration of a cease-fire in Monrovia on 26 May, after nearly two months of hostilities in the city. With the exception of the withdrawal of armed fighters from Monrovia, the factions have failed to take the further steps necessary to reconcile their differences.

During its summit in Yaoundé, from 8 to 10 July 1996, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) condemned the faction leaders for the breakdown of the peace process and warned that unless they returned to the Abuja Agreement, OAU would support the imposition of sanctions against them and consider requesting the United Nations Security Council to establish a war crimes tribunal for Liberia.

ECOWAS Summit, 26 and 27 July 1996

4. My Special Envoy for Liberia, James O. C. Jonah, and my Special Representative, Anthony Nyakyi, as well as the OAU Eminent Person for Liberia, Canaan Banana, attended the Summit of ECOWAS Heads of State, convened in Abuja on 26 and 27 July 1996, and the preparatory ministerial level meeting that preceded the Summit. My Special Envoy reported that the ECOWAS Heads of State strongly condemned the factions leaders for their continued inability to settle the conflict peacefully and expressed their increasing impatience with the Liberian situation. The Heads of State nevertheless remained committed to finding a peaceful solution.

5. ECOWAS discussed the idea of restructuring the Council of State and holding early elections, following substantial disarmament of the factions, as a means of breaking the impasse in the peace process. They also discussed the idea of adopting sanctions to be imposed against recalcitrant faction leaders and their supporters. There was a general consensus that these ideas should be explored further. Accordingly, the ECOWAS Heads of State requested their Foreign Ministers to meet again, before 18 August, to deliberate on these ideas and work out the modalities for their implementation. While ECOWAS endorsed the draft status-of-forces agreement for ECOMOG, it was decided that the signing of the document would take place only with a restructured Council of State. At the end of the Summit, Sani Abacha, the Head of State of Nigeria, was elected as the Chairman of ECOWAS. He succeeded President Jerry Rawlings of Ghana who had served as the Chairman of ECOWAS since July 1994.

6. Although the faction leaders did not participate in the ECOWAS meetings, General Abacha met them on 30 July, upon the conclusion of the summit. Thereafter, they issued a statement indicating their agreement to end immediately and unconditionally all hostilities throughout Liberia, to disengage their forces, to dismantle all checkpoints and to disarm by the end of September 1996.

7. In the period leading up to the second ECOWAS meeting, the faction leaders made a number of public statements reiterating their commitment to the peace process. Nevertheless, while some checkpoints were dismantled, the leaders failed to meet the commitments they entered into on 30 July 1996. They also failed to convene a meeting of the Council of State, which has not met since the outbreak of hostilities on 6 April, or to demonstrate the cohesiveness necessary to facilitate a return to the peace process. Their views on the issues discussed during the 26 and 27 July ECOWAS Summit continued to differ, in particular with regard to the need to restructure the Council of State, the question of full disarmament before elections and the organization of early elections.

8. During the reporting period, a number of civilian groups met to discuss their concerns regarding the restoration of the peace process. These groups included the Liberian National Conference, the National Council of Elders for Peace and Unity for Liberia, the Liberians United for Democracy, the Liberia National Students Union, the Federation of Liberian Youth, the Union of Former Legislators of Liberia, the Interests Group of Liberia, the Liberian Alternative at Work for Peace and Democracy and the Press Union of Liberia. These organizations called on the factions to disarm and on the Council of State to de-factionalize government ministries and institutions, as well as the Electoral Commission, as conditions for holding free and fair elections.

ECOWAS Summit, 17 August 1996

9. The ECOWAS Foreign Ministers met in Abuja on 14 August to work out the modalities for restoring the peace process. My Special Envoy and my Special Representative, as well as the OAU Eminent Person for Liberia and the Special Envoy of the Former ECOWAS Chairman, Kojo Tsikata, attended these meetings. A number of Liberian civilian groups and all faction leaders, including Roosevelt Johnson, were present in Abuja for the meetings and were fully consulted by ECOWAS in the course of its deliberations.

10. The Foreign Ministers agreed on a new timetable for the implementation of the Abuja Agreement, starting with the restoration of the cease-fire by 31 August 1996 and concluding with the holding of free and fair elections on 30 May 1997 and the installation of a new government on 15 June 1997 (see annex I). They recommended that the revised timetable be divided into five stages with a built-in monitoring mechanism to ensure its strict compliance. At every stage, ECOWAS would verify that the necessary steps had been implemented in accordance with the provisions of the Agreement and its timetable. Any person or group found responsible for obstructing the implementation of the Agreement would be subject to the imposition of sanctions by ECOWAS. Such sanctions would include, inter alia, restrictions on travel and imports and freezing of business activities and assets in the subregion. The Foreign Ministers also recommended that a code of conduct be established for members of the Council of State and transitional government.

11. The Foreign Ministers discussed the conditions to be met in order to hold free and fair elections, including, inter alia: an unequivocal agreement by those contesting the elections to respect their outcome; a fair electoral law, including the basis of representation; the creation of a level playing field to ensure that all parties would have fair and equal access to voters and that civil society would be able to publicize its views; an independent electoral commission; adequate post-election constitutional guarantees for protecting the interest of political minorities and a basic level of security to permit the fulfilment of these conditions.

12. In their review of the situation in Liberia, the Foreign Ministers noted that the country's security agencies had become factionalized and endorsed the proposal to seek assistance from donors for the restructuring of the armed forces, police and other security institutions.

13. In meetings held on 15 and 16 August, the faction leaders and Liberian civilian groups agreed to the decisions reached by the ECOWAS Foreign Ministers, as well as the need to appoint a new Chairperson of the Council of State.

14. In their meeting on 17 August, the ECOWAS Heads of State endorsed the decisions taken by the Foreign Ministers and the designation of Ruth Perry, a former Senator from Grand Cape Mount county and a former member of the Transitional Legislative Assembly, as the new Chairperson of the Council of State. The ECOWAS Heads of State also agreed not to recognize any government that came to power in Liberia through the use of force. They called for the full enforcement of the arms embargo and decided that they would, if and when necessary, call on the United Nations Security Council to impose visa restrictions on recalcitrant faction leaders. They also endorsed the decision of the Foreign Ministers to seek the assistance of the United Nations in the organization of elections in Liberia.

III. MILITARY ASPECTS

Status of the cease-fire in Monrovia

15. The cease-fire in Monrovia, which was re-established on 26 May 1996 with the deployment of ECOMOG throughout the city, is generally holding. ECOMOG reported that, by the end of May, between 70 and 80 per cent of the fighters of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and Alhaji Kromah's wing of ULIMO had withdrawn from the city. However, many of these fighters remain on the outskirts of the city and as many as 4,000 NPFL fighters have reportedly assembled at Kakata, some 55 kilometres north of Monrovia.

16. The withdrawal of ULIMO-J and Liberian Peace Council (LPC) fighters from Monrovia was more difficult, as they argued that their strongholds in Tubmanburg, Todee, Kakata and Bong Mines, to which they were to withdraw, were insecure. On 11 June, however, about 60 ULIMO-J and 120 LPC fighters gave up their arms to ECOMOG. Most of these fighters reportedly remained in Monrovia, albeit unarmed, while others moved towards Grand Cape county (see map attached as annex III).

17. ECOMOG has launched a cordon and search operation in and around Monrovia to collect the arms left behind by the factions upon their withdrawal from the city. UNOMIL is verifying this process and is assisting ECOMOG to keep a systematic record of the weapons collected and in making arrangements for their storage. To date, ECOMOG has collected some 515 assorted rifles and 47 sub-machine-guns, as well as other small arms and ammunition.

Status of the cease-fire outside Monrovia

18. Despite the relative calm in Monrovia, hostilities continued in the south-east and west during the reporting period. The two wings of ULIMO remain engaged in Bomi and Grand Cape Mount counties, particularly in the areas of Tubmanburg and Robertsport. Hostilities also continued between NPFL and LPC in the south-east and reports were received of NPFL incursions into the LPC

stronghold of Greenville. Fighting between NPFL and LPC occasionally spilled over the border into Côte d'Ivoire.

19. The Cease-fire Violations Committee, which is chaired by UNOMIL, has met on a regular basis to address reports of continued hostilities, as well as the fighting that occurred in Monrovia in April and May 1996. The work of the Committee has, however, been frustrated by the lack of cooperation of some factions. The NPFL continues to maintain that its actions in Monrovia and the south-east were taken on behalf of the Government and do not constitute a violation of the cease-fire. The NPFL has not, therefore, attended meetings of the Cease-fire Violations Committee.

Deployment of UNOMIL

20. As noted in my last report, with the outbreak of hostilities and breakdown of the peace process on 6 April, all but 15 of the 93 UNOMIL military observers deployed in Liberia at that time were repatriated. Initially, 5 military observers, including the Chief Military Observer, remained in Monrovia and 10 military observers were kept on standby in Freetown. Since then, 5 additional military observers have been redeployed to Monrovia, while those on standby in Freetown have been repatriated, leaving a total strength of 10 military observers in Liberia (see annex II).

21. The Chief Military Observer of UNOMIL, Major-General Mahmoud Talah (Egypt), completed his tour of duty on 31 May. Until such time as a substantial increase in UNOMIL military strength is required, the Mission's military component will be headed by an Acting Chief Military Observer, Colonel David Magomere (Kenya).

22. During the period under review, UNOMIL increased the frequency and area covered by its patrols. UNOMIL now conducts regular patrols to Kakata and Buchanan and has also patrolled as far north as Gbarnga. Efforts to reach Tubmanburg have failed owing to continued insecurity in the area and lack of cooperation from the factions.

23. As noted above, during the meetings of the ECOWAS Heads of State on 17 August, the factions recommitted themselves to cease all hostilities, disengage their forces and disarm. In view of these agreements and the improved security in many parts of Liberia, I intend to immediately deploy an additional 24 military observers to Liberia in order to re-establish a UNOMIL presence in Buchanan, Kakata and Suehn, to provide the Mission with a capacity to verify any disarmament which may take place and to undertake more frequent and widespread patrolling activities. I also intend to deploy to Liberia a disarmament adviser to assist UNOMIL and ECOMOG to prepare for the eventual disarmament of the factions, in particular with regard to the logistic requirements involved.

24. The further expansion of UNOMIL, even at a modest level, remains severely constrained by the extensive looting of its equipment and vehicles during the hostilities of April and May. However, the recent redeployment of one of the two UNOMIL helicopters will provide essential air support for the Mission and assist it in monitoring the cease-fire and disengagement of forces.

Deployment of ECOMOG

25. The ECOMOG Field Commander, Major-General J. Inienger (Nigeria), is expected to have completed his tour of duty and handed over his command on 21 August to a new Field Commander, Major-General Victor Malu (Nigeria). ECOMOG also recently appointed a new Chief of Staff and rotated several battalions. During the reporting period, ECOMOG reasserted its control over Monrovia and its environs and is presently deployed as far north as Kakata, the Po river to the west and Buchanan to the east.

26. During a meeting of the ECOWAS Chiefs of Staff in Abuja on 13 August, the Field Commander reported that ECOMOG continues to suffer from manpower and logistic constraints and would require substantial additional resources to be able to maintain peace and security in Monrovia and respond to any tasks involved in a new schedule for the implementation of the Abuja Agreement, including disarmament and the creation of secure conditions for elections. He reported that minimum requirements for ECOMOG to carry out its responsibilities included an acceptable level of communication between units and bases; availability of power generation facilities, especially in remote areas; and additional trucks and air support to ensure adequate mobility of troops.

27. Many ECOWAS Chiefs of Staff indicated the desire of their Governments to contribute additional troops to ECOMOG, but stated they would require logistic support in order to do so. In this connection the following countries offered troops: Ghana (one battalion); Niger (between a company and a battalion); Burkina Faso (one reduced battalion); Gambia (a limited company); and Côte d'Ivoire (50 medical and paramedical personnel). Benin and Togo also expressed interest in providing troops for ECOMOG.

IV. SECURITY ASPECTS

28. Despite substantial improvement since the restoration of the cease-fire in Monrovia, the security situation in the city remains a cause for concern. UNOMIL has recently observed an increase in the number of unarmed fighters in Monrovia and has reported that the city is now divided along factional lines. In addition, despite ECOMOG efforts to collect arms hidden in the city, it is believed that many arms caches still exist.

29. Furthermore, recent weeks have witnessed a new wave of violence in Monrovia, some of which may have been politically motivated. On 7 August, a member of the Transitional Legislative Assembly from Bomi county was assassinated. Also on 7 August, the Deputy Foreign Minister (ULIMO-K appointee) was kidnapped near the Barclay Training Centre. He was later released after the intervention of ECOMOG. In addition, during the first week of August, two young women associated with ULIMO-J, LPC and AFL were killed in the Congotown section of Monrovia, which is an NPFL/ULIMO-K stronghold. On 10 August, a shooting incident also occurred in downtown Monrovia between two ULIMO-J generals following a quarrel over looted goods.

30. Although United Nations personnel were not deliberately targeted during the hostilities, they still risk becoming victims of armed assault or being caught

in crossfire. In order to assist UNOMIL and the United Nations agencies revise their joint security and evacuation plan, a technical team from the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator visited Liberia from 15 to 21 June. Given the limited means of evacuation from Monrovia and precarious security situation, UNOMIL maintained a restricted strength of international civilian personnel and military observers during the reporting period. However, in view of recent progress in the peace process, and as noted in other sections of the present report, I intend to deploy to Liberia additional essential military and civilian personnel to assist UNOMIL to respond to developments on the ground. The Mission's security and evacuation plans will be adjusted accordingly to ensure that all personnel are able to operate in conditions of safety and security.

31. The Security Council is aware of the extensive looting that took place during the recent hostilities in Monrovia. A total of 489 vehicles, valued at $8,313,342, were taken from UNOMIL, the United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations. My Special Representative has written to the Chairman of the Council of State on several occasions, demanding that the Transitional Government take action to retrieve the looted vehicles. He has also conveyed this demand to Charles Taylor, Alhaji Kromah and ULIMO-J senior officials. However, despite the assurances given by the faction leaders, only 11 vehicles have been recovered. The return of United Nations looted property also remains a concern of ECOMOG. Unfortunately, the factions have not cooperated with ECOMOG in its attempts to retrieve looted vehicles. During its recent meeting in Abuja, ECOWAS decided that the faction leaders should be held fully responsible for the looted vehicles and called on them to return them to their rightful owners.

V. HUMANITARIAN ACTIVITIES

32. The April/May fighting in Monrovia, in which the Ministry of Health estimated that 3,000 persons died, has had a profound effect on the humanitarian situation and on humanitarian operations in Liberia. Disregard for the Principles and Protocols of Humanitarian Operations, lack of free access by the humanitarian community to populations in need, as well as the deliberate abuse of internationally recognized conventions of human and child rights, remain the primary constraints on humanitarian operations in Liberia.

33. A study of Monrovia by the United Nations Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Office in June confirmed that approximately 50 per cent of the population (361,880 persons) had fled their homes, as a result of the hostilities in April and May. Of these, 30 per cent moved to shelters in the city, while 17 per cent fled Monrovia and/or the country. Overcrowding in safer parts of the city led to a deterioration of sanitary conditions and increased vulnerability of the population to epidemic diseases, including cholera. A nutritional survey carried out by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and a group of non-governmental organizations in July revealed an increase in malnutrition rates of 15.3 and 24.7 per cent for children in resident and displaced persons shelters respectively.

34. The systematic looting of United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations during the hostilities severely affected their ability to respond effectively to humanitarian needs throughout the country. Appeals to faction leaders to return vehicles and other assets have gone largely unheeded. The humanitarian situation in the hinterland is virtually unknown since insecurity and the loss of operational means have prevented the humanitarian community from accessing these areas. Nevertheless, the humanitarian community has, within its means, responded to needs in a timely and effective manner and, to the extent possible, increased its area of coverage. The United Nations Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Office has led cross-line assessment missions to the Nimba and Upper Lofa counties. Up-country deliveries have been made from Monrovia to Bong, Margibi and Montserrado counties and cross-border operations have been undertaken from Côte d'Ivoire into parts of Nimba and Bong counties. The Buchanan area has, until recently, been kept supplied with relief items using boats.

35. While Monrovia and some counties are accessible, fighting continues to impede access to other areas in the west and east of the country. Ongoing fighting between the two wings of ULIMO in Bomi county has compelled over 5,000 people to flee to the outskirts of Monrovia, where many of them, in an advanced degree of malnutrition, have been assisted by humanitarian agencies. Because of insecure conditions and lack of cooperation from the factions, the humanitarian community has not been able to deliver food and medical supplies to the civilian population trapped in Tubmanburg. Furthermore, some factions continue to control the movement of civilians under the pretext of protecting them - a practice that subjects innocent civilians to extremely harsh conditions. Following extensive negotiations, 500 malnourished civilians were recently allowed to leave the area of Suehn.

36. Fighting in both Monrovia and outlying counties has triggered new outflows of refugees into neighbouring countries. Unfortunately, some countries of the subregion, already overburdened by large numbers of Liberian refugees, have begun to turn away those seeking asylum in their territories. The fighting in Monrovia has equally affected the estimated 120,000 Sierra Leonean refugees in Liberia. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) presently has access only to an estimated 15,000 refugees from Sierra Leone, who reside in various shelters in and around Monrovia. UNHCR is currently working out modalities for the repatriation of some 5,000 refugees who have expressed their desire to return to Sierra Leone.

37. Given that the operational capacity of the factions has been enhanced by the looting of equipment and vehicles and a safe working environment has yet to be restored, the non-governmental organization community has decided to limit its operations to targeted life-saving activities. The United Nations agencies have taken a similar stance, but have agreed to maintain operations in certain critical areas, including alleviation of hunger and malnutrition; prevention of diseases through sanitation, water purification and immunization; provision of basic education; protection of refugees; and support for displaced persons, children, women and other vulnerable groups. These operating positions have been endorsed by the Inter-agency Standing Committee. In addition, the Catholic Church in Liberia, which operates the largest education system in the country apart from that of the Government, has closed its education and health systems,

with the exception of the main Catholic Hospital, until free and fair elections are held. These positions have a far-reaching effect on the level of delivery of humanitarian assistance in the country and the ability of the humanitarian community to respond effectively in providing assistance related to the revitalization of the peace process. As the security situation improves, however, these positions will be revised and activities gradually increased.

VI. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

38. The cautious expansion in socio-economic activities that occurred after the signing of the Abuja Accord in August 1995 suffered a serious setback as a result of the recent hostilities. Most United Nations agency activities geared towards rehabilitation, reconstruction and development have come to a virtual standstill. Commercial activities have dropped to an all-time low and the prices of available commodities have skyrocketed. The price of rice, the staple food of Liberia, has tripled and the price of gasoline has fluctuated violently, reaching a peak of 20 times the pre-April price. The parallel exchange rate of the Liberian dollar against the United States dollar increased by 75 per cent and, as at 2 August 1996, only three of the six major banks providing services in Liberia before the 6 April fighting had reopened.

39. The fighting resulted in the massive destruction and looting of capital assets and physical infrastructure. Hospitals, clinics, offices of both national and international organizations, as well as an estimated 30 per cent of houses in central Monrovia, were destroyed. The impact of the crisis on the public sector has been disastrous. Government facilities, including assets donated by donors and United Nations agencies, were systematically looted. While some government ministries and agencies have tried to reopen, they suffer from a lack of manpower and resources necessary to deliver even basic services. The salaries of civil servants have not been paid since before the crisis, resulting in increasing absenteeism of government employees. Many professionals and businessmen fled the country in the wake of the crisis and the impact of the drain of human resources has severely affected the Liberian economy.

40. Nevertheless, many civilians in Monrovia appear to be coping with the impact of the crisis through petty trading and the mutual support system of the extended family tradition. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is preparing a series of socio-economic impact studies to document the effects of the recent fighting on the civilian population in Monrovia and the economy in general. Various subsector studies in areas crucial for future reintegration, rehabilitation and resettlement will follow. These follow-up studies are intended to rebuild the database to facilitate planning for the reintegration, rehabilitation and resettlement process, if and when conditions in Liberia improve and allow such a transition.

VII. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

41. The cost of maintaining UNOMIL at its present reduced strength is approximately $1 million per month. The General Assembly, in its decision 50/482 of 7 June 1996, authorized me to utilize the resources currently

available to UNOMIL for its maintenance through 30 September 1996, subject to the extension of the mandate by the Council and requested me to present a revised budget for UNOMIL for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997.

42. Should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of UNOMIL as envisaged in paragraph 51 below, the cost for the maintenance of UNOMIL will be reflected in my revised budget to be submitted to the Assembly.

43. As at 31 July 1996, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNOMIL special account since the inception of the Mission totalled $10.8 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peace-keeping operations as at 31 July 1996 amounted to $2,176.4 million.

44. Since my last report, there have been no further voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for Liberia.

VIII. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

45. Liberia has suffered a tremendous ordeal since hostilities erupted on 6 April 1996. Thousands of lives have been lost, hundreds of families displaced and the city of Monrovia and its fledgling economy have been largely destroyed. Yet the successful outcome of the 17 August ECOWAS Summit offers some hope for the restoration of the peace process. During the Summit, the Liberian civilian community came together to ensure its views were heard in deciding the future of the country. ECOWAS and the other facilitators of the peace process, including UNOMIL and the mediation team of Ambassadors from Nigeria, Guinea, Sierra Leone and the United States, once again demonstrated their ability to coordinate their efforts in seeking to resolve the Liberian conflict. Finally, ECOWAS adopted a number of new and far-reaching measures to ensure the effective implementation of the peace process.

46. Under the new timetable for the implementation of the Abuja Agreement, the faction leaders agreed to cease all hostilities throughout the country and to disarm so that free and fair elections can be held by the end of May 1997. They have reached many similar agreements in the past, only to renege on each of them. However, the measures adopted by ECOWAS for the periodic review of progress in the implementation of the Agreement, the formulation of a code of conduct for members of the Council of State and transitional government and the decision to impose sanctions against any party not in compliance with these measures will encourage the faction leaders to live up to their commitments.

47. I welcome the designation of a new Chairperson of the Council of State. This appointment, which was made largely at the insistence of Liberian civilian groups, demonstrates the growing influence of Liberian civilian society in the peace process. It will also help to encourage the Council of State to act as an impartial governing body, in accordance with the provisions of the Abuja Agreement.

48. The steps recently taken by ECOMOG to reinvigorate its presence in Liberia and ensure its viability as an effective peace-keeping force represent another positive development in the Liberian peace process. These efforts could be

compromised, however, if ECOMOG is not provided with additional manpower, as well as with adequate and dependable financial and logistic resources, necessary to carry out its tasks. The Government of the United States has recently renewed its pledge of an additional $30 million in support for ECOMOG, part of which has already been committed. Further assistance is urgently required if the tight implementation schedule agreed upon by ECOWAS is to be adhered to. I therefore urge potential donor countries to support ECOMOG and to provide concrete assistance for the peace-keeping force as soon as possible.

49. ECOWAS, the Liberian civilian groups and faction leaders have expressed an interest in seeking assistance from the United Nations for the electoral process. The type of assistance expected from the United Nations has not yet been defined, although some have suggested that the United Nations should play an enhanced role in the organization and conduct of the elections. The holding of free and fair elections requires that a number of conditions, as noted in paragraph 11 above, are fulfilled. While these conditions were discussed at the ECOWAS Summit, the modalities for their implementation are still to be worked out. Among other things, the electoral law must be reviewed, the basis of representation decided upon, and the question of the Electoral Commission addressed to ensure its full independence.

50. Under its present mandate, provided under resolution 1020 (1995) of 10 November 1995, UNOMIL is to observe and verify the election process, in consultation with OAU and ECOWAS, including the legislative and presidential elections to be held in accordance with the provisions of the peace agreements. My Special Envoy has made it clear to both ECOWAS and the members of the Council of State that, in accordance with established procedure, any change in the electoral mandate of UNOMIL would only be considered on the basis of an official request defining the type of assistance sought from the Organization. He also stressed that such a change would have to be approved by the Security Council.

51. ECOWAS has renewed its commitment to restoring peace and a democratically elected government in Liberia and to remain engaged in that country until a new government is installed on 15 June 1997, in accordance with the revised timetable of the Abuja Agreement. I fully support the endeavours of ECOWAS and, in the light of its renewed commitment to the peace process, I recommend that the Security Council consider extending the mandate of UNOMIL for a period of three months. During that time, I will continue to monitor the situation in Liberia closely. Should the factions demonstrate their full commitment to the peace process, it would be my intention to provide to the Security Council by mid-October recommendations on any enhanced United Nations role that may be needed to support the efforts of ECOWAS and create conditions conducive to peace, stability and national reconciliation in Liberia.

52. In the meantime, I intend to deploy to Liberia an additional 24 military observers, as well as additional essential civilian personnel in the fields of disarmament, elections, human rights and public information, as well as administration, to assist UNOMIL to respond to developments on the ground. Should the pace of implementation of the military provisions of the Abuja Agreement necessitate a further increase in the military strength of UNOMIL, I would consider the deployment of some additional military observers, within the

Mission's currently authorized strength of 160 and inform the Security Council accordingly in my mid-October report.

53. The ECOWAS States are clearly frustrated with the situation in Liberia and the lack of cooperation they have received from the faction leaders in their long endeavour to bring peace to that country. Nevertheless, they have decided to give the factions one last chance to take the steps necessary to restore a democratically elected government in Liberia. I urge the faction leaders to remember the precedent of Somalia and hope they seize this opportunity to restore peace in their country. For if they do not, the international community may have no choice but to disengage from Liberia.

Annex I

Revised schedule of implementation of the Abuja Agreement

20-31 August 1996	Cease-fire, disengagement of factions from checkpoints and present combat positions
1 September- 30 November 1996	Delivery of logistic supplies by the international/donor community to ECOMOG
20 August 1996- 31 January 1997	Verification of the cease-fire and disengagement by ECOMOG, UNOMIL and the Liberian National Transitional Government
3-10 October 1996	Assessment meeting in Liberia by the Chairman's Special Envoy with ECOMOG, UNOMIL, representatives of the donor community and the Liberian National Transitional Government
12 October 1996- 31 January 1997	Reconnaissance mission by ECOMOG and UNOMIL of arms collection centres
4-8 November 1996	Committee of Nine Meeting a/ (Ministerial) in Monrovia
7 November 1996- 31 January 1997	Deployment of ECOMOG to agreed safe havens by the Committee of Nine
22 November 1996- 31 January 1997	Disarmament, demobilization and repatriation
6-13 January 1997	Verification visit to Liberia by the Chairman's Special Envoy with ECOMOG, UNOMIL, representatives of the donor community and the Liberian National Transitional Government
20 January- 15 April 1997	Preparation for elections
10-15 March 1997	Committee of Nine Meeting, Monrovia
17-24 April 1997	Assessment visit to Liberia by the Chairman's Special Envoy with ECOMOG, UNOMIL, representatives of the donor community and the Liberian National Transitional Government
30 May 1997	Election Day

---

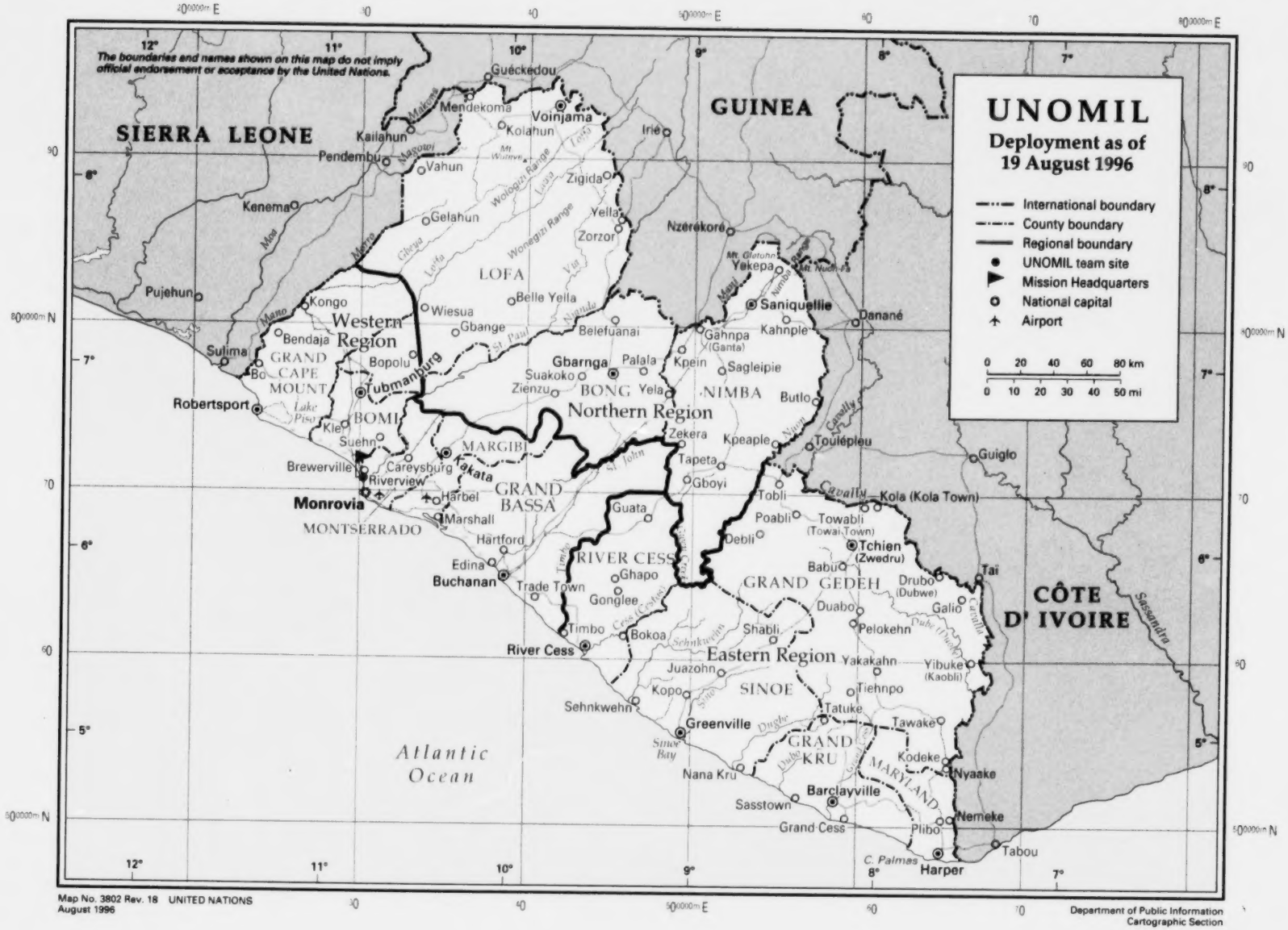
a/ The ECOWAS Committee of Nine is comprised of those ECOWAS member States most directly involved in the resolution of the Liberian conflict (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo).

Note. The new schedule of implementation of the Abuja Agreement also provides for the dissolution of all factions by 31 January 1997, resignation by 28 February 1997 of the members of the Council of State and public office holders who wish to run for election. The new government is expected to be sworn in on 15 June 1997.

Annex II

Composition of the military component of UNOMIL as at 21 August 1996

Bangladesh	1
Egypt	1
India	3
Kenya	2
Malaysia	1
Pakistan	2
Total	10



Map No. 3802 Rev. 18 UNITED NATIONS
August 1996

Department of Public Information
Cartographic Section

UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/685
22 August 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 22 AUGUST 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AFGHANISTAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, dated 22 August 1996 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) A. G. FARHÂDI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

96-21626 (E) 230896 240896

/...

Annex

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, 22 August 1996

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan makes the following statement in relation with the peace process in Afghanistan, especially concerning document S/1996/607, dated 31 July 1996, and the letter by the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General on 22 August 1996 (S/1996/683):

1. The Afghan Government appreciates the interest of its neighbour, the Republic of Uzbekistan, in the peace process in Afghanistan and highly values the efforts of President Islam Karimov in favour of peace in Afghanistan and for the broadening of economic relations between the countries of the region.

2. The Islamic State of Afghanistan reiterates its full support of the General Assembly resolution on Afghanistan adopted by consensus on 19 December 1995 (resolution 50/88), which proves to be increasingly credible and which provides the framework of the mandate of the United Nations Special Mission in Afghanistan. The Islamic State of Afghanistan also considers that the presidential statements adopted on many occasions since 1993 in relation with the situation in Afghanistan contain beneficial and effective elements.

3. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan highly appreciates, in the letter of the President of the Security Council to the Secretary-General, the mentioning of the fact that: "The members of the Security Council are convinced that the main responsibility for finding a political solution to the conflict lies with the parties and that all States must refrain from interference." The Afghan Government fully shares these views of the Security Council members.

4. As the General Assembly resolution recognizes, the lack of unity in the political views of the Afghan parties involved, exacerbated by foreign interferences, has been the main factor preventing the securing of an effective and lasting peaceful solution in Afghanistan.

The Government of Afghanistan believes that no means is more needed than national reconciliation for a settlement in Afghanistan. In the same way, no other means of settlement, including an "arms embargo", would be workable without a national reconciliation in the country.

5. It is obvious that an arms embargo can be implemented against a Member State which, by its armed action, violates the disposition of the Charter of the United Nations and creates a threat to international peace and security by an aggressive policy. No article of the Charter stipulates such a measure to be carried out against the Government of a Member State which itself is a victim of foreign interventions and conspiracies and which is defending its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

6. An idea is being floated around that international monitoring teams are to be assigned in the airports in Afghanistan to report on the importation of arms, ammunition and spare parts by the Afghan Government.

It is quite clear that such a proposal is only a prescription to invite the armed groups fighting the Government to broaden their actions of armed aggression simply because no monitoring is practically feasible along the land boundaries adjacent to the territories they are occupying.

Afghanistan as an independent, indivisible, unitary State enjoys its national sovereignty. The Afghan Government has the duty to take necessary measures to defend its territorial integrity and national unity. In accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, the Islamic State of Afghanistan has the inherent right of self-defence. Any attempt to prevent Afghanistan to strengthen its national defence as a sovereign State would therefore be against the United Nations Charter and practically against the interests of peace, stability and security in the region.

Had the Government of Afghanistan been convinced that not importing arms, ammunition and spare parts would effectively serve security peace in Afghanistan, it would voluntarily decide not to use in practice this very right recognized by international law. On the contrary, armed forces fighting the Afghan Government would find such a situation very convenient for further expanding their acts of aggression including the firing of artillery and rockets on the civilian population of the capital and other acts against the humanitarian laws.

7. As far as the implementation of the arms embargo against the armed groups fighting the Government is concerned, these groups are not legal subjects of international law. Their accountability and their observance of any resolution in this regard is neither legally nor practically credible. The only legal instrument would be the implementation of the curb of illicit transfer of arms to such groups from abroad.

8. The Islamic State of Afghanistan agrees with the majority of Member States that the Security Council does not have to adopt any resolution the implementation of which is exhaustibly burdensome and eventually unattainable. More than 1,250 km-long frontiers in the south-east and south of Afghanistan are unguarded. The requirements of practically implementing an arms embargo on such a ground are not workable and the financial implication involved would be exorbitant. The parties involved will continue to fight by using their arms in their possession even if supposedly a quasi-impossible arms embargo is announced.

9. General Assembly resolution 50/70 J, adopted by consensus on 12 December 1995 on measures to curb the illicit transfer and use of conventional arms, is of great importance in the matter. Unfortunately, this resolution is not implemented in many parts of the world where peace and stability is threatened, including Afghanistan.

10. Document S/1996/607 mentions "the drug trafficking, terrorism, violence and arms trafficking that have accompanied the Afghan crisis".

The Afghan Government believes that these are the characteristics of those areas of Afghanistan where the armed groups fighting the Government are ruling and using these very criminal means for prolonging their domination.

In the areas of Afghanistan ruled by the Government and where the punishment to be undertaken by the Government is predictable, no drug trafficking, terrorism, violence or arms trafficking prevail.

11. The Government of Afghanistan considers that the practices of the Security Council in conducting "the consultation meetings" do not pay any regard to the representative of any Member State directly involved, if that Member State is not a permanent or non-permanent member of the Security Council, to be heard during the consultation.

In the course of the last 50 years, the "consultation meetings" have become increasingly important among the endeavours of the United Nations in favour of peace and security. The most substantive discussions related to the drafting of the resolutions and the presidential statements take place in these "consultation meetings". Not allowing a Member State mainly involved in a matter of peace and security to be heard in the "consultation meetings" may cause the conclusions of these meetings not to serve the purpose of the Council. This is a major point regarding not only the transparency of the workings of the Security Council, but the relations between the Council and the States Members of the United Nations which are not members of the Council, and which are expecting that fairness ought to prevail in all Security Council deliberations.

The Government of Afghanistan formally requests, through this official note, the Security Council to take a favourable procedural decision in order for any Member State directly involved in a matter to acquire the right to be heard during a part of the "consultation meetings".

12. As far as presentation of a draft resolution on Afghanistan, proposed in document S/1996/607, is concerned, the Afghan Government considers that any draft proposed, before being presented to the Security Council, needs to be thoroughly discussed with Afghanistan, the neighbours of Afghanistan and other mainly interested countries.

13. The Government of Afghanistan is also of the opinion that no initiative implying the inefficacy of the United Nations Special Mission in Afghanistan, which currently deploys valuable efforts for a national reconciliation in Afghanistan, must be taken by the Security Council.

UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/686
23 August 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 23 AUGUST 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ERITREA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you a copy of a letter dated 22 August 1996 from H.E. Mr. Petros Solomon, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea, to H.E. Ambassador Francis Gutmann, Special Envoy of the President of the French Republic, regarding the situation in the Lesser Hanish islands in the Red Sea.

(Signed) Amdemicael KAHSAI
Permanent Representative

96-21712 (E) 230896 240896

/...

Annex

Letter dated 22 August 1996 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Eritrea addressed to the Special Envoy of the President of France

The unilateral decision we have undertaken to evacuate from Lesser Hanish in order to ensure that the arbitration process is not hampered and to avoid getting immersed in unnecessary wrangling remains in place.

However, there are indications that establish an unbridled Yemeni intention to occupy Lesser Hanish when we evacuate it. If this transpires, it will precipitate a very dangerous situation. Rather than complaining and regretting the fact after it occurs, it is imperative that guarantees be made a priori to avert such a dangerous eventuality. In this spirit, we wish to request, in advance, your views and stance on the vital matter of guarantees.

(Signed) Petros SOLOMON

UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/687
23 August 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 23 AUGUST 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ERITREA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you a statement issued on 22 August 1996 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea concerning the situation in the Lesser Hanish islands in the Red Sea.

(Signed) Amdemicae KAHSAI
Permanent Representative

96-21718 (E) 230896 240896

/...

Annex

Statement of 22 August 1996 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea on the situation in the Lesser Hanish islands

It is to be recalled that a French delegation led by Ambassador Francis Gutmann arrived in Asmara on 18 August 1996 and thoroughly discussed the misunderstandings that have arisen due to the recent circumstances in the Lesser Hanish islands. The Government of Eritrea expressed its appreciation to the delegation for the prompt initiative taken and the concern shown by the Government of France.

In the talks that ensued, the Government of Eritrea was not provided with convincing evidence to refute the presence of its units on the islands, both before and after the 21 May 1996 Agreement of Principles. However, the smooth progress of the arbitration being the main issue of concern to it, the Government of Eritrea saw no possible advantage in dwelling at length to clarify the veracity of the matter. As a matter of fact, it consciously avoided being locked in such wrangling and assured the French delegation that it would evacuate its units from the Lesser Hanish islands within a short time. This decision was officially transmitted by a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea, on 18 August 1996.

While these measures of patience and restraint were exercised by the Government of Eritrea in the interest of peace and security in the region, they have been reciprocated by irresponsible acts of provocation by the Government of Yemen. On the morning of 19 August 1996, Yemeni troops using two fast boats came close to the shore of the Lesser Hanish islands and fired shots at our forces. In the afternoon of the same day, more Yemeni troops using seven boats passed along the shores of the islands. In both instances, our forces refrained from responding in a similar manner.

The Government of Eritrea is well aware of the aims behind these sinister provocations by the Government of Yemen. Despite that, it opted to take a unilateral decision to evacuate from Lesser Hanish in order to ensure that the arbitration process is not hampered and to avoid getting immersed in unnecessary wrangling. At this juncture, the Government of Eritrea would like to put the above-mentioned and other incessant negative behaviour of the Yemeni Government on record and call upon the Security Council to pay due attention to the matter.

UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/688
23 August 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 23 AUGUST 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ERITREA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to forward the attached letter addressed to you from H.E. Mr. Petros Solomon, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea, dated 23 August 1996, concerning the situation in the Lesser Hanish islands in the Red Sea, which I received today.

I should be grateful if you would kindly arrange to have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Amdemicael KAHSAI
Permanent Representative

96-21724 (E) 230896 240896

/...

Annex

Letter dated 23 August 1996 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council

You will have been informed of the unilateral decision that the Government of Eritrea has taken to evacuate from the island of Lesser Hanish as a gesture of its goodwill to ensure the unhindered progress of the arbitration process to which it is firmly committed, and, in the interests of peace in the region. My Government has in fact taken the decision while fully acknowledging the lack of convincing evidence to disprove its presence in the island.

While these are the facts of the matter, we have been surprised to learn that the Security Council considers the prevailing situation as a cause for alarm prompting it to call for the "immediate Eritrean withdrawal". It is not for us to speculate on what forces might be pushing for this unwarranted move, but we would like to believe that the Security Council is not being unduly influenced by the mendacious accusations coming from Yemen which, in practice, is indulging in provocative acts to hamper the constructive decision we have taken to promote the arbitration process. I have in mind the provocative incidents perpetrated by Yemen on 19 August 1996, only one day after having been officially notified by the Government of France of our decision to evacuate.

(Signed) Petros SOLOMON

UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/689
23 August 1996
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 22 AUGUST 1996 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I.
OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you that violations of Iraq's airspace by United States, British and French aircraft continued over the period 1 to 15 August 1996 and that the aircraft in question carried out reconnaissance and engaged in acts of provocation. The details are as follows:

1. In the northern region 93 sorties were flown at speeds of 600 to 900 kilometres per hour and at altitudes of 6,000 to 9,000 metres, over the following Iraqi cities and towns: Mosul, Irbil, Dohuk, Zakho, Aqrah, Amadiyah and Tall Afar.

2. In the southern region 533 sorties were flown at speeds of 600 to 900 kilometres per hour and at altitudes of 6,000 to 9,000 metres, over the following Iraqi cities and towns: Nasiriyah, Samawah, Jalibah, Busayyah, Qurnah, Chabaish, Salman, Amarah, Lasaf, Artawi, Shatrah, Shinafiyah, Ushbayjah, Mu'aniyah, Qal'at Sukkar, Basrah and Shu'aybah.

3. On 13 occasions United States TR-1 reconnaissance aircraft flying at speeds of 600 kilometres per hour and at altitudes of 20,000 metres violated the Republic of Iraq's airspace in the southern region before leaving in the direction of Kuwait.

4. At 1005 hours on 4 August 1996 a hostile formation dropped 10 heat flares in the Saddam dam area of Ninawa Governorate.

You are requested to intervene with the countries in question with a view to bringing a halt to actions that, as flagrant violations of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law, pose a threat to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Iraq.

These actions continue to alarm the civilian population and to cause serious damage to private and public property. The Republic of Iraq affirms its right to seek legal compensation for the damage being inflicted on the Iraqi people and the Iraqi State by these actions.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Saeed H. HASAN
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/690
26 August 1996
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

LETTER DATED 25 AUGUST 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BURUNDI TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to inform you that under Article 35, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations, the Government of Burundi has decided to propose the convening of an urgent meeting of the Security Council to discuss the total and illegal economic blockade, which is in all respects contrary to international law, imposed by the States of the Great Lakes Region and the threat of an imminent arms embargo to the very severe detriment of our country and our people. Having been a member of the Security Council, Burundi has been and remains a witness to and aware of the various procedures applied in the Council. These are in conformity both with the Charter of the United Nations and with the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, while adjusting to the requirements which vary from case to case. In this connection, the Government of Burundi urges the President of the Security Council to organize in advance a public debate before proceeding to the drafting of the draft resolution. This procedure has the great merit of offering all the parties against whom the two complaints formulated by Burundi are directed the opportunity to state their case. On the other hand, hurrying to draft and submit a draft resolution before hearing the views of the two sides is tantamount to putting the cart before the horse, and hence convicting or acquitting the parties before the presentation of their respective grievances.

In accordance with Articles 31 and 32 of the Charter and rules 37 and 38 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the delegation of Burundi requests authorization to participate, without vote, in the public debate.

(Signed) Térence NSANZE
Ambassador and Permanent Representative

96-21849 (E) 260896 270896

UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/691
23 August 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

FURTHER REPORT ON THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN CROATIA PURSUANT TO SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1019 (1995)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1019 (1995) of 9 November 1995 and the presidential statement of 3 July 1996 (S/PRST/1996/29), in which the Council, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General to keep it informed on the progress of measures undertaken by the Government of the Republic of Croatia to implement Security Council resolutions 1009 (1995) and 1019 (1995). Those resolutions were adopted following Croatia's military operations of May and August 1995, by which the Government regained control of formerly Serb-controlled areas of its territory, located in Western Slavonia and the Krajina region, which had been designated United Nations Protected Areas (UNPAs) and were known as Sectors West, North and South. In those resolutions, the Council demanded, inter alia, that the Government of the Republic of Croatia respect fully the rights of the local Serb population in the former Sectors, including the right to remain, leave or return in safety, take urgent measures to put an end to all violations of international humanitarian law and human rights in the areas and investigate all reports of such violations so that those responsible for such acts could be judged and punished.

2. In its presidential statement of 3 July 1996, the Security Council, while noting Croatia's cooperation with international human rights mechanisms and its consideration of various initiatives for the protection of minority rights, reiterated its deep concern at the failure by the Government of Croatia to take sufficient measures to safeguard the rights of the local Serb population and to ensure their safety and well-being and strongly deplored such failure to act. The Council further urged the Government of Croatia to take steps forthwith to comply with the demands contained in its resolution 1019 (1995) and in its statements of 8 January 1996 (S/PRST/1996/2), 23 February 1996 (S/PRST/1996/8) and 22 May 1996 (S/PRST/1996/26) and requested the Secretary-General to keep it regularly informed of the progress of measures taken by the Government of Croatia and to report to it no later than 1 September 1996.

3. My last report on this subject was submitted on 21 June 1996 (S/1996/456). The present report considers further developments up to the beginning of August 1996. The information contained herein, compiled by the field operation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in the former Yugoslavia, comes from a variety of sources, including the European Community Monitoring Mission (ECMM), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The report also makes reference to material provided by the Government of Croatia, including the "Report by the Government of the Republic of Croatia on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1019 (1995)", dated 10 June 1996, hereafter referred to as "the report by the Government"; an aide-mémoire by the Government of Croatia dated 30 July 1996 delivered to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; and information provided by the Croatian Office for Displaced Persons and Refugees. Substantial information has also been received from local and international non-governmental human rights organizations active in Croatia (including the Croatian Helsinki Committee, Otvorene Oci ("Open Eyes"), the Dalmatian Solidarity Committee (DOS), Homo, the Committees for Human Rights in Karlovac and Pakrac, the Serbian Democratic Forum and the Anti-War Campaign, Croatia).

II. HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND THE RESPONSE OF THE GOVERNMENT

A. General human rights situation

4. All recent reports indicate that residents of the Krajina and Western Slavonia regions continue to suffer from inadequate security conditions and a well-founded fear that they might fall victim to theft or physical attack at any time. Croatian Serbs remain by far the most common victims of violent assault. As during the spring of 1996, the problem is especially serious in the area around Knin in former Sector South. The situation in former Sector North, while improved since my last report, continues to be a cause for concern. The situation in former Sector West is assessed to be generally better.

5. Dozens of reports of looting and harassment by uniformed military personnel and civilians have been received this summer by both international and local observers. Items typically stolen from residents range from electrical appliances, such as heaters and radios, to agricultural equipment, livestock and crops. Fixtures, including windows and fences, are reported to have been removed from unoccupied properties by persons equipped with trucks. Houses throughout the area fly Croatian flags and many bear painted messages in the Croatian language saying, for example, "Croatian house - do not touch", but these steps are often ineffective in providing protection. The Government commented in its aide-mémoire that "the rate of crime within the liberated areas [the former Sectors] is almost equal to the remaining parts of Croatia". However, international and local observers believe that a reinforced and effective police presence in the region would drastically reduce crime.

6. Recent examples of looting include a major incident on the evening of 27 June 1996 in Masnikose, former Sector South, in which armed individuals entered the town, forced some 30 elderly residents to lie on the ground, and stole cattle and more than 100 sheep. A police investigation of the case failed

to yield any results. On 14 June 1996, two sheep were reportedly taken from a resident of the village of Padjene, near Knin, by soldiers who threatened to burn the man's house if he did not cooperate. On 1 July 1996 in Mala Crkvina, unknown civilians took some livestock from a 95-year-old woman and reportedly beat her when she tried to resist. In June and July, thefts and other violence were also reported in the Plavno valley, in Kistanje, Tiskovac, Komalic, Golubic and Vrhovine in former Sector South, and in Kostajnica and Glina in former Sector North. By contrast, in the region of Biskupija, outside of Knin, looting has reportedly decreased owing to frequent police patrols. The area around Pakrac in former Sector West is reported quite secure owing to strong measures taken by the Chief of Police.

7. The climate of fear in the Krajina region has been aggravated during the summer by several incidents in which explosives have been placed on the properties of the remaining local Serb population. An elderly couple was seriously injured at Debelo Brdo, near Korenica, on 24 May 1996 by an explosive device hidden next to their front door. The husband suffered two broken legs, while his wife sustained a broken arm and serious shrapnel wounds in her chest and leg; both victims required several weeks of hospitalization. An elderly man was killed by an explosive device, which observers reported was laid in a field near his home in Pisac in late June, and a woman reportedly lost a leg because a bomb was placed at her front door between 15 and 20 July 1996 in the village of Vojnovac, near Plaski. On 14 August 1996, a 75-year-old Serb man was killed by an explosive device, which had been placed at the door to his house in Vrebac, near Gospic, in former Sector South. Meanwhile, an unoccupied house belonging to a Croatian Serb was blown up on 8 July 1996 in the village of Kosora in the Sinj municipality, former Sector South, while three houses were struck by rocket-propelled grenades in Irinovac during the first week of August. Occasional cases of arson have also been recorded in the past several months, including in the villages of Lasinjski Sjenicak and Krcevina, former Sector North, during the third week of June 1996.

8. A new disturbing development has been a spate of attacks and threats against non-governmental organizations engaged in human rights monitoring and humanitarian relief activities in the area. On the night of 22 July, the office of the Croatian non-governmental organization Homo, which has worked with OXFAM, was set on fire in Vrhovine. In late July, an explosive device was placed near the home of the President of the Croatian Helsinki Committee, an outspoken critic of human rights violations (against Croatian Serbs), on the island of Brac. Human rights workers have reported concern for their personal safety and often feeling they are being monitored by persons opposed to their activities.

9. International and local observers take the view that principal responsibility for the continuing insecurity lies with the local police, who are either unable or unwilling to take effective action against the ongoing wave of criminal activity against the Croatian Serbs. Despite the fact, for example, that in several victimized locations there is only one road providing access in and out of the communities, arrests of looters have been rare. There is no evidence to prove that any of the recent violent attacks against residents have been solved by the Croatian police, or that perpetrators have been punished. While many police officers conduct their work in a professional manner, a substantial minority does not. Indeed, in some cases, police officers are

themselves reportedly involved in criminal activity. Security in the region generally suffers from a shortage of professional and responsible police officers.

10. Deep concern at the prevailing situation in the former Sectors was expressed by the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights in a letter addressed to the Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights on 20 August 1996. The Special Rapporteur emphasized her view that the continuing state of insecurity in the region, so long after the conclusion of last summer's military operations, would seem to indicate an unwillingness on the part of the authorities to take preventive measures.

B. Investigation and prosecution of crimes committed against the Serb population during the summer of 1995

11. In its presidential statement of 23 February 1996 (S/PRST/1996/8), the Security Council stated that it looked to the Croatian Government to pursue vigorously prosecutions against those suspected of past violations of international humanitarian law and human rights against the local Serb minority. In my last report, I referred to information contained in the 10 June 1996 report by the Government, which indicated that criminal proceedings had been instituted or final verdicts reached against an aggregate of 2,849 persons, or hundreds of crimes committed during the summer of 1995 in the former Sectors.

12. However, in my last report I noted some problems with the Government's figures, including the fact that 41 of the 231 final verdicts reportedly reached in those cases concerned charges of armed rebellion or subversive and terrorist activity - charges which generally have been brought by Croatian authorities against local Serbs. It is also unclear from the report by the Government how many final verdicts resulted in prison sentences or fines, or whether some of the defendants were set free. It may further be noted that, of a total of at least 5,000 cases of arson reported by international observers in the former Sectors following last year's "Operation Storm", the Government's report suggests that proceedings were instituted against a mere 10 persons, with final verdicts reached in two cases. Additional crimes listed in the report by the Government include forging of documents, endangering traffic safety and embezzlement, which, it may be argued, do not fall within the scope of the concern expressed by the Security Council in its presidential statement of 23 February 1996 regarding past violations of international humanitarian law and human rights against the local Serb minority. It is therefore a persistent cause of concern that many of the crimes committed last summer remain uninvestigated and unpunished by Croatian authorities.

13. With reference to murders committed in the former Sectors after last summer's military operations, recent information from the Government and other sources indicates that trials of eight persons for responsibility in the Varivode and Gosic cases, concerning, respectively, the killings of nine and seven elderly Serbs in August and September 1995, have resulted in acquittals of the accused. According to independent observers, the acquittals followed the court's findings of serious deficiencies in the investigations by the authorities and unreliable evidence against the defendants. The court

reportedly held that investigation of the crime scenes was lacking in detail and took place too long after the time the crimes were discovered. Bodies of the victims were allegedly buried and had to be exhumed for purposes of forensic examination. Defendants reported that they had been pressured and in some cases physically mistreated in attempts by the authorities to extract confessions. It is further reported that some of the defendants, who were active members of the Croatian armed forces at the time the crimes were committed, learned later they had been issued papers discharging them from military service which were backdated to a date preceding the murders.

14. In proceedings conducted concurrently with those of the Varivode and Gosic cases, however, the court convicted two individuals for other crimes committed following "Operation Storm", one a murder of a man at Zrmanja and the other an attempted murder at Ocestovo. The Government states in its aide-mémoire that three other persons have recently been convicted for murders, receiving sentences of seven, six and three years, respectively, while proceedings have begun against two other persons for a killing committed in Mukinje.

15. Concerning the murder of five elderly Serbs at Grubori on 25 August 1995, the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights was informed by the Government on 26 June 1996 that the investigation of this crime had not yielded any results, despite the fact that license plate numbers of Croatian special police vehicles parked near the scene had been provided to the authorities by members of a United Nations human rights action team.

III. HUMANITARIAN AND ECONOMIC SITUATION

16. The Government of Croatia is pursuing the implementation of its humanitarian programme "Let's Save Lives", which has provided emergency assistance to vulnerable persons residing in the former Sectors. It is estimated that nearly 10,000 Croatian Serbs, most of them elderly people, remained in the area following "Operation Storm". Although relief provided in the weeks following the military operations was seriously inadequate, the programme now in place appears by most accounts to be effective in meeting the population's most urgent needs, including food delivery and medical care. The Croatian Red Cross has been active in this regard, and in some cases the local police are also providing humanitarian assistance. Concern has been raised, however, that the onset of winter will again place elderly residents in the region at great risk, particularly if they continue to live alone without the support of their children and other younger relatives, many of whom are now refugees in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and elsewhere.

17. A key factor in relief efforts has been the assistance provided by international humanitarian organizations. Among the most active groups have been UNHCR, ICRC, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. ICRC has deployed several mobile teams, which have worked to identify the needs of persons living in more remote areas. It also supplied food to a public kitchen in Knin and distributed seeds and tools as part of an agricultural assistance programme during the spring.

18. The effectiveness of local officials in handling social welfare questions varies considerably throughout the region. Reports continue to be received of persons who encounter either hostility or simple inattention in their attempts to obtain Croatian identity documents, which are required for access to social benefits such as pensions. For example, a Croatian Serb woman was reportedly physically abused and thrown out of a municipality office in Glina, former Sector North, in early July 1996 when she attempted to obtain a signature on a document certifying her retirement. Persons from mixed marriages have faced particular difficulties owing to the widely held view that Croats who had remained in the area of the so-called "Republic of Serb Krajina" during the war were disloyal to the Republic of Croatia.

19. While Croat communities are gradually being rebuilt in the former Sectors, discrimination is being reported against Croatian Serb communities in the provision of reconstruction assistance and in the restoration of essentials such as water, public transportation services and employment. Although the entire region suffers from economic inactivity, the few jobs that become available are far more likely to be offered to Croats than to qualified Croatian Serbs.

20. In its aide-mémoire, the Government advises that it has taken steps to improve the social welfare and social security situation in the former Sectors, despite the limited financial resources available to it. The Government asserted that "domestic policies are implemented on a non-discriminatory basis, and indeed, follow International Labour Organization standards, notably those established by Convention No. 102 on Minimum Standards of Social Security".

IV. RETURN OF CROATIAN SERB REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS

21. It will be recalled that nearly 200,000 Croatian Serbs are estimated to have fled to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Bosnia and Herzegovina following Croatia's military operations during the summer of 1995. In my last report, I noted that as of 10 June 1996, a total of 7,065 persons had returned to Croatia following authorization from the Croatian Office for Displaced Persons and Refugees (ODPR). According to ODPR, as of 1 August 1996 this number had risen to 9,253 out of a total of 16,000 applicants (sources in Belgrade put the figure of total applicants somewhat higher, at around 20,000 persons). Most applications for return were approved on the basis of family reunification. The Government further estimates that an additional 2,000 to 3,000 persons have returned "using other means". The Government has stressed its view that the number of authorized returns of Serbs to Croatia, which has steadily increased since the beginning of the year, should be seen in a positive light, particularly since practically no refugees or displaced persons have returned to certain areas elsewhere in the former Yugoslavia controlled by authorities of national groups which are not their own.

22. Of those who have received official authorization to return, ODPR indicates that 61 per cent are persons 60 years of age or more. The Head of ODPR advised the Zagreb office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights that short-term plans call for focusing on applications for return from relatives of elderly local Serbs still in the former Sectors who require the assistance of younger family members to lead a normal life. This approach had been advocated

by international organizations involved with return issues, particularly UNHCR and ICRC. It is important that these reunifications be facilitated before the onset of winter, when the well-being of the elderly will again be at risk. One potential obstacle to the return of young adult males is the requirement that they first undergo interrogations by Croatian authorities concerning their activities on behalf of the so-called "Republic of Serb Krajina". In the absence of broad amnesty legislation, these interrogations have caused widespread apprehension among potential returnees, as well as delays in the processing of applications.

23. ODPR acknowledges that the majority of returnees have joined relatives in parts of Croatia other than the former Sectors themselves. Indeed, the number of Croatian Serbs who have actually returned to homes in the former Sectors North and South is low, with estimates ranging from 1,000 to 1,500. Meanwhile, it is estimated that some 10,000 Croatian Serbs remained in former Sectors North, South and West after last summer's military operations. ODPR states that it expects Croatian Serb returnees to "gradually return to their property, in the course of reconstruction of the infrastructure and general improvement of the situation in the former Sectors". Some public statements by the Government have not, however, been so encouraging. In a speech before the Croatian World Congress at Brioni on 7 July 1996, President Tudjman stated that Croatia had not demanded that the Croatian Serbs leave, but most had done so because of their wish to rule in Croatia, and Croatia could not agree to their return at this time. In a speech at Knin on 5 August 1996, which was proclaimed a national holiday known as "Homeland Thanksgiving Day" in commemoration of the anniversary of the conclusion of "Operation Storm", President Tudjman declared that "we returned Zvonomir's city, the Croatian city of Knin, to the lap of the Croatian motherland, clean as it was in Zvonomir's time".

24. While the number of Croatian Serbs in the former Sectors has remained low, the area has continued to see a major influx of displaced Croats returning from elsewhere in the country, as well as a large resettlement of Croat refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia who had been living in Croatian refugee camps and shelters. As noted in my last report, as of 10 June 1996, a total of 36,766 displaced persons from Croatia had been registered as returnees in former Sectors North, South and West, while some 14,000 refugees had also received temporary accommodation there. More Croat refugees are moving into the area every day. Some reports indicate that some of these refugees, while entitled to shelter, are creating security problems, including involvement in looting. At the same time, it should be noted that some Croat refugees and displaced persons have themselves been victims of crimes.

25. Earlier this year, the Government of Croatia linked the question of a large-scale return of Croatian Serb refugees to a global agreement to be reached with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the context of overall normalization of relations. In this regard, it is important to note the accord reached on 7 August 1996 in Greece between the Presidents of Croatia and Serbia, consenting to the establishment of diplomatic relations by the end of August 1996. Earlier this summer it had been agreed to confer consular status to the liaison offices in Zagreb and Belgrade.

26. The use of properties abandoned by Croatian Serbs during last summer's exodus has been one of the most contentious issues in the past several months. According to the Law on Temporary Take-Over and Administration of Property, adopted by the Government in late 1995, abandoned homes may be given over temporarily to refugees and displaced persons. This process is administered by local property commissions, which are reported to vary greatly in their effectiveness at safeguarding property rights. Numerous reports by returning Croatian Serbs indicate they have been unable to regain possession of their homes from their temporary occupants, and in some cases had been obliged to take shelter with neighbours. This remains a serious problem, particularly in the areas of Karlovac, Vojnic, Vrginmost, Ogulin and Plaski.

V. DETENTION AND THE AMNESTY QUESTION

27. As noted in my last report, as of 1 June 1996, the number of Croatian Serbs remaining in detention following last summer's military operations was some 200. On 1 August 1996, the ICRC reported that this number remained essentially unchanged.

28. Concerning the broader question of a general amnesty for persons who served with the armed forces of the so-called "Republic of Serb Krajina (RSK)", there have been no new developments since my last report. The Croatian Government has not supplemented its amnesty legislation of 17 May 1996, which applied only to Croatian Serbs who fought in the region of the former Sector East, and not to persons who served with the "RSK" in the former Sectors North and South. Concern over the Government's approach to the amnesty question was raised earlier this summer when a list with the names of 811 persons exempted from coverage under the Sector East law because of alleged complicity in war crimes was made public. The Government's publication of this list, which it declared was still incomplete, has caused considerable apprehension among local Serbs, both within and without Croatia.

VI. LEGAL PROTECTION FOR THE SERB POPULATION

29. Since my last report, the Government of Croatia has taken no action to rescind its decision of September 1995 suspending several articles of a special constitutional law affecting the rights of national minorities, principally Serbs. There have also been no new developments in the establishment of a provisional human rights court, which had been called for by the Security Council and recommended by numerous international observers.

30. In its report of 10 June 1996, the Government stated that experts from the Council of Europe, called upon to work with the Government to draft legislation on the provisional court of human rights, had "concluded that the principle upon which the establishing of the provisional court for human rights was founded, no longer had any factual basis, since such a court would represent an obstacle to the jurisdiction of the European Commission for Human Rights and the European Court for Human Rights". Indeed, experts from the Council concluded, in May 1996, that Croatia's pending admission made the provisional court of human rights "not now an apposite or necessary means of protection". 1/ However, the

experts strongly recommended as an alternative "the creation of a body with a partially international composition integrated into the Croatian domestic legal order", and raised the possibility of allowing the Constitutional Court to sit as an enlarged body in circumstances where it is seized of questions concerning minority rights. 2/ This recommendation is still to be considered.

31. With reference to suspension of articles of the special constitutional law affecting national minorities, the Council's experts expressed concern at "the discouraging psychological effect that the suspension would certainly have on minorities and displaced populations which would like to remain in or return to Croatia". The experts said that the law's altered text "cannot be said to constitute an adequate response to the new situation", and recommended a number of revisions to the suspended provisions of the law to provide for greater protection of minority rights. 3/

32. It should be noted that Croatia's application for admission to the Council of Europe is now pending before the Committee of Ministers of the European Union, following the Parliamentary Assembly's vote on 24 April 1996 in favour of Croatia's application. A final decision was postponed, subject to Croatia's fulfilment of certain conditions, including improvement of conditions for the return of refugees, progress on protection of minorities and cooperation with the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

33. The Government indicated that it is proceeding with other initiatives for the protection and promotion of human rights. It has established a High Commission for Equality and a High Commission for Human Rights Education, both at the ministerial level. In its report of 10 June 1996, the Government further indicated its intention to establish local bodies for human rights coordination in the 20 counties throughout the country which would pay special heed to coordination with Croatian non-governmental organizations. The Government also advised that it is setting up human rights counselling centres throughout the country's court system.

34. The vacancy since last April in the office of the Ombudsman, intended by law to be an independent guarantor of human rights, was filled on 28 June 1996 with the appointment of Mr. Ante Klaric. The Government stated its plans to strengthen the Ombudsman's office by increasing the number of deputies from 3 to 20, permitting it to be represented in every county in the country.

35. In its communications with the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Government has emphasized its continuing cooperation with numerous international mechanisms, including the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights as well as various treaty bodies connected to international instruments to which Croatia is a State party. As I noted in my last report, Croatia has also approved a long-term Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) human rights monitoring mission in the country, and it has formally requested technical assistance from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

VII. COOPERATION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

36. The International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia has advised me that the cooperation it has received from the Government of Croatia remains largely as described in my last report. The Prosecutor continues to have regular contact with the Croatian authorities and to maintain a liaison office in Zagreb. There is continuing concern, however, over Croatia's failure to execute arrest warrants in respect of prominent accused persons known or believed to be in areas under its control. It was reported, for example, in July 1996 that Mr. Dario Kordic, a former top officer in the Croatian Defense Forces (HVO) of the so-called "Republic of Herzeg-Bosna" in Bosnia and Herzegovina, who has been indicted for alleged involvement in the killing of Bosniak civilians in the Lasva Valley in that country in 1993, maintains a home in Zagreb which he visits regularly. He attended a concert in Medjugorje, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in July 1996, at which he sat only a few seats away from the President of Croatia. As of 10 August 1996, Croatia had delivered one indicted suspect to the International Tribunal who had voluntarily surrendered to authorities. Another suspect was being held in a Croatian prison pursuant to an indictment by the International Tribunal.

37. The Government has dismantled its War Crimes Commission, which was the principal channel through which information on crimes was transmitted to the International Tribunal. The task of cooperation with the International Tribunal has now been entrusted to a Government panel, including among its members the Ministers for Defense and Foreign Affairs.

38. The International Tribunal reports that the first phase of its examination of cases arising out of "Operation Storm" has been carried out successfully, and the liaison office in Zagreb has received good practical cooperation at the police level in Croatia.

39. It may be noted that Croatia's implementing legislation for cooperation with the International Tribunal retains a great deal of control of communications and decision-making in the hands of Croatian political and judicial authorities. It is too early yet to assess the impact such measures will have on overall cooperation, since they are capable of serving either to enhance or restrict it.

VIII. OTHER ISSUES

40. In my last report, I noted developments concerning the Kupljensko refugee camp, located in the area of the former Sector North in Croatia. As of 10 June 1996, the camp was sheltering, in difficult conditions, nearly 3,000 Bosniak refugees from the nearby region of Velika Kladusa in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In a positive development, the makeshift Kupljensko camp was closed on 1 August 1996. Most of the camp's residents were transferred in July to the Government's Gasinci refugee facility in eastern Croatia, while several hundred more were relocated to the island of Obonjan. Several hundred long-time Kupljensko residents have reportedly been cleared for admission to third countries, including Canada and the United States of America.

41. The fate of the remaining Velika Kladusa refugees in Croatia remains uncertain, since many express continuing fear of returning to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Indeed, reports indicate that the situation in Velika Kladusa remains insecure, with attacks against returning refugees still a common occurrence. For the time being, the refugees are sheltered in better conditions than those which had been prevalent at Kupljensko. However, their humanitarian needs and the ultimate resolution of their refugee claims will continue to require close attention from the Government of Croatia.

IX. OBSERVATIONS

42. A prevailing climate of lawlessness causing great fear among local residents persists in the former Sectors North, South and West, particularly in the area around Knin. It is evident that the Government still has not taken adequate measures to provide an effective police presence in the region. Looting and intimidation remain widespread. Since my last report, the situation has been aggravated by several bombing attacks against members of the local Croatian Serb population and by harassment of non-governmental human rights organizations. It is evident that the Croatian Serbs do not feel that the existing security conditions are conducive to their return.

43. Concerning the investigation and prosecution of past violations of international humanitarian law and human rights against the local Serb population, much progress remains to be made by the Croatian authorities. At the international level, the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia indicates that it is receiving satisfactory cooperation from Croatian police authorities for its own investigation of crimes which followed last summer's military operations in the former Sectors. The International Tribunal is concerned, however, that the Croatian authorities have not executed arrest warrants transmitted to them relating to prominent accused persons known or believed to be in areas under their control.

44. The Government has now authorized the return to Croatia of more than 9,000 Croatian Serbs. However, reports indicate that fewer than a quarter of these individuals have returned to the former Sectors North, South and West, and there are still as many as 10,000 refugees who have already notified the authorities of their wish to return. The process of the return of Croatian Serbs is thus moving slowly. Meanwhile, tens of thousands of Croats, both displaced persons and refugees, are settling in the region. While these persons have a legitimate right to a decent home, the manner in which the Croatian Government has been approaching this question is having a profound impact on the region's ethnic balance, transforming the population from being predominantly Serb to one that is largely Croat.

45. The question of property requires particular attention from the Croatian authorities. Largely owing to a lack of cooperation from local officials, some returning Croatian Serbs have been unable to regain possession of their homes, which are occupied by Croat refugees from elsewhere in the former Yugoslavia. Croatia should also take other measures to facilitate the return of Croatian Serbs, including improving the processes for issuing identity documents and providing access to social benefits such as reconstruction assistance and

pensions. Strong measures should be taken against widespread employment discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin.

46. Continuing areas of concern in Croatia include the Government's reluctance to enact a broad amnesty for former soldiers of the so-called "Republic of Serb Krajina" and its failure to re-enact or provide a meaningful replacement for suspended constitutional provisions for the protection and promotion of minority rights in Croatia. While some positive steps have been taken such as the establishment of various government bodies to promote human rights and reinforced cooperation with international human rights mechanisms, the overall approach of the Government to the rights of Croatian Serbs in Croatia has so far failed to encourage confidence within the Serb population.

Notes

1/ European Commission for Democracy through Law, Report on the Implementation of the Constitutional Law on Human Rights and Freedoms and on the Rights of Ethnic Communities and Minorities in the Republic of Croatia (Venice, 17-18 May 1996), para. 30.

2/ Ibid., paras. 32-34.

3/ Ibid., paras. 9-11.

UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/692
26 August 1996
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 26 AUGUST 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, and with reference to paragraph 2 of the letter dated 5 August 1996 addressed to you by the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations (S/1996/627), I have the honour to inform you of the following.

The United Arab Emirates protests against the allegation in the above paragraph according to which the airspace over Abu Musa island belongs to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

My Government rejects this allegation, which it considers a flagrant violation of the sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates over Abu Musa island, as one of the persistent measures which the Islamic Republic of Iran has taken and continues to take with respect to the island, in violation of the memorandum of agreement concluded in November 1971, with a view to dominating the island and annexing it by force.

The United Arab Emirates categorically rejects any infringement of its sovereignty over Abu Musa island and reaffirms that it is fully disposed to settle the question of the three islands (the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa) through peaceful means, including recourse to the International Court of Justice.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammad J. SAMHAN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

96-21961 (E) 260896 260896 270896

UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/693
26 August 1996
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 26 AUGUST 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

With reference to document S/1996/603, concerning the simplification of the list of matters of which the Security Council is seized (rule 11 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council), and on instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you of the following:

The United Arab Emirates objects to the procedures set forth in document S/1996/603 for the removal from the list of matters of which the Council is seized of matters that have not been considered by the Council and to the deletion of the item listed in the annex to the document as No. 16, which is entitled "Letter dated 3 December 1971 from the Permanent Representatives of Algeria, Iraq, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council" and which relates to the question of the Iranian occupation of the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa, three islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates.

Until such time as the Islamic Republic of Iran terminates its illegal occupation of the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa and the United Arab Emirates regains de facto control of the three islands, my Government requests the Security Council to retain in the list of matters of which it is seized the item relating to the question of the islands and listed as No. 16 in the annex to document S/1996/603. The reasons for this are as follows:

(a) The continued illegal occupation by the Islamic Republic of Iran of the Lesser Tunb and the Greater Tunb is in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law.

(b) The Islamic Republic of Iran has not ceased to violate the memorandum of understanding of November 1971 through the measures it has taken and is continuing to take on Abu Musa with a view to imposing its control over the island and forcibly annexing it to Iranian sovereignty.

(c) My Government fears that the Islamic Republic of Iran would exploit the deletion of the item in question from the list of matters of which the Council is seized in order to perpetuate its occupation of the three islands and would use it as a pretext to evade the application of the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force.

In the light of the foregoing, my Government is prompted by the hope that the Security Council will retain the item relating to the question of the three islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates in the list of matters of which it is seized. Should the Council decide to consider the retention of the item in the list of matters of which it is seized or its deletion therefrom at some time in the future, my Government requests the Council to inform it accordingly and to allow it the opportunity to participate in the relevant discussion in the Council's formal meetings, given that the issue of the three islands concerns the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the United Arab Emirates.

My Government takes this opportunity to affirm the desire of the United Arab Emirates for security and stability in the Arabian Gulf and to confirm its commitment to the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammad J. SAMHAN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/694
26 August 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 26 AUGUST 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF RWANDA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to forward to you herewith a joint communiqué that was issued following the meeting between the Prime Minister of Rwanda, Mr. Pierre Celestin Rwigema, and the Prime Minister of Zaire, Mr. Kengo Wa Dondo, who was in Rwanda for an official visit on 21 and 22 August 1996 (see annex).

The Government of Rwanda welcomes the outcome of this meeting.

The Government of Rwanda wishes to reiterate to the international community that it will spare no efforts in exploring home-grown initiatives to address the problems of the Great Lakes region, within the framework of the Nairobi Declaration of 7 January 1995, the Cairo Declaration of 29 November 1995, the Tunis Declaration of 18 March 1996 and the summit of the Heads of State of the region at Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania on 24 and 25 June 1996.

In the above-mentioned declarations the countries of the region have committed themselves individually and collectively on specific measures with a view to finding appropriate solutions to the problems of their region.

The Government of Rwanda would like to restate its position regarding the proposal to convene an international conference on peace, security and development in the Great Lakes region. Such a conference can only be helpful if the efforts of the countries of the region have not succeeded. It is only then and following a request by the countries of the region themselves that the idea of a regional conference under the auspices of the United Nations could be helpful.

The decisions and measures contained in the joint communiqué of 21 and 22 August 1996 by the Prime Ministers of Rwanda and Zaire deserve the support of the international community in order to facilitate the smooth and orderly repatriation of all Rwandan refugees from Zaire.

96-21973 (E) 270896 270896 280896

/...

You may also wish to note that, in addition, the Governments of Zaire and Rwanda agreed on other measures of closer cooperation in the areas of security at their common borders, the judiciary, the return of property and in the area of economic cooperation within the framework of the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL).

Other recent developments that might be of interest to members of the United Nations Security Council include the voluntary repatriation of thousands of Rwandan refugees from Burundi to Rwanda. As at 26 August 1996, 96,000 Rwandan refugees had gone back to their respective rural communities in Rwanda. The remaining 4,000 Rwandan refugees who are still in Burundi are likely to return to Rwanda by the end of this month.

Finally, I would like to request the circulation of the present letter and the attached joint communiqué as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Gideon KAYINAMURA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
Rwanda to the United Nations

Annex

[Original: French]

Joint communiqué issued following the official visit to Rwanda by the Prime Minister of Zaire from 21 to 22 August 1996

1. At the invitation of His Excellency Mr. Pierre Celestin Rwigema, Prime Minister of the Rwandese Republic, His Excellency Mr. Kengo Wa Dondo, Prime Minister of the Republic of Zaire, paid an official visit to the Rwandese Republic from 21 to 22 August 1996.

2. The Zairian delegation was led by His Excellency Mr. Kengo Wa Dondo, Prime Minister of the Republic of Zaire, assisted by His Excellency Mr. Jean-Marie Kititwa Tumansi, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, and His Excellency Grand Admiral Mavua Mudima, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence, Security and Veterans Affairs.

3. The Rwandan delegation was led by His Excellency Mr. Pierre Celestin Rwigema, Prime Minister of the Rwandese Republic, assisted by Mr. Anastase Gasana, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Mr. Patrick Mazimhaka, Minister of Rehabilitation and Social Integration, Mr. Pie Mugabo, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, and Colonel André Rwigamba, directeur de cabinet in the Ministry of National Defence.

4. During their talks, the two Heads of Government reviewed the state of relations between Zaire and Rwanda, focusing, in particular, on the following points:

1. Repatriation of Rwandan refugees in Zaire;

2. Security on the two countries' common borders;

3. Repatriation of property;

4. Zairian refugees in Rwanda;

5. Cooperation in judicial matters;

6. Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL).

4.1 Repatriation of Rwandan refugees

The two Heads of Government agreed as follows:

A. To make feasible the massive, organized and unconditional repatriation of all Rwandan refugees. To this end, the Zairian Government undertakes to proceed with the gradual closing of the camps and to ensure the rapid repatriation of Rwandan refugees, and the Rwandan Government undertakes to adopt

all the measures needed to ensure the safe return and settlement in its territory of these refugees;

B. To organize cross-border visits, mainly to the refugee and transit camps, by the authorities of the two countries;

C. To continue the efforts to separate innocent people who fled the fighting or were forced into exile by the militia, former members of the Rwandan armed forces and former Rwandan government officials from those who would intimidate them;

D. To request the international community to extend humanitarian assistance to refugees repatriated to Rwanda with a view to creating conditions that would be conducive to their settlement.

4.2 Security on the two countries' common borders

The two Heads of Government agreed as follows:

A. To prevent each country's territory from being used as a base for operations aimed at destabilizing the other;

B. To continue the efforts to disarm the armed members of the former Rwandan armed forces and the Interahamwe militia, and to seek and destroy arms caches wherever they may be found;

C. To exchange all relevant security information.

4.3 Repatriation of property

The two Heads of Government decided to establish a Main Commission on Repatriation of Property, comprising the following subcommissions:

- The subcommission on Rwandese property in Zaire;
- The subcommission on stolen Zairian property in Rwanda;
- The Rwanda/Zaire/International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) tripartite subcommission, which will shortly release its conclusions concerning the technical requirements for take-off of the Air Zaire Boeing 737 aircraft.

4.4 Zairian refugees in Rwanda

The two Heads of Government agreed that Zairian refugees in Rwanda would be repatriated with the assistance of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

4.5 Cooperation in judicial matters

The two Heads of Government agreed to cooperate in judicial matters, particularly with the International Tribunal for Rwanda in the search for

persons responsible for genocide and alleged perpetrators of crimes against humanity committed in Rwanda from April to July 1994, through the implementation of the convention on cooperation in judicial matters between the Republic of Burundi, the Rwandese Republic and the Republic of Zaire, signed at Kigali on 21 June 1975.

4.6 Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL)

The two Heads of Government undertook to revitalize the CEPGL organs without delay.

5. In addition, the two Heads of Government undertook to bring into operation immediately the various subcommissions established at Goma on 1 September 1994 and at Bujumbura on 10 June 1995, following the ministerial meetings which had, inter alia, sought to consider by mutual agreement the problems relating to:

A. The repatriation of Rwandese refugees;

B. Mutual security;

C. Property taken to Zaire, with a view to its restitution.

6. In view of the magnitude of the damage inflicted on Zaire by the massive and prolonged presence of Rwandan refugees in Zairian territory, the two Heads of Government again called on the international community to grant increased assistance to Zaire.

7. On the occasion of the visit to Kigali by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Zaire, His Excellency Mr. Kengo Wa Dondo, the two Heads of Government reviewed the current situation in the Great Lakes region, particularly the situation in Burundi following the coup d'état perpetrated in that country on 25 July 1996. In this connection, they reaffirmed the commitments made by their Governments at Arusha and Kampala to the re-establishment of an institutional framework and to national reconciliation.

8. At the end of their visit, His Excellency Mr. Kengo Wa Dondo, Prime Minister of the Republic of Zaire, and the delegation accompanying him expressed their gratitude to the Rwandese Government for the warm and fraternal welcome extended to them upon their arrival in the "land of 1,000 hills".

9. The Prime Minister of the Republic of Zaire took the opportunity to invite the Prime Minister of the Rwandese Republic to accompany him on a visit to the Rwandan refugee camps in Zaire.

10. The Prime Minister of the Rwandese Republic warmly accepted this invitation. He thanked the Prime Minister of the Republic of Zaire and his delegation for having paid this visit to Rwanda with a view to further strengthening the ties of friendship and cooperation between the peoples of the two countries.

11. The talks between the two Heads of Government took place in an atmosphere of mutual candour, understanding and confidence.

DONE at Kigali on 22 August 1996.

For the Government of the
Rwandese Republic:

(Signed)
Pierre Celestin RWIGEMA
Prime Minister

For the Government of the
Republic of Zaire:

(Signed)
KENGO wa DONDO
Prime Minister

UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/695
27 August 1996
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 26 AUGUST 1996 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

With reference to document S/1996/603, concerning the deletion of items from the list of matters of which the Security Council is seized, I have the honour to communicate to you the concern of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic at the proposals made in that document, particularly that for the automatic deletion of certain matters.

In this connection, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic would like to state as follows:

1. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic strongly objects to the deletion of item 40, "Letter dated 4 February 1986 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council", which makes reference to irrefutable evidence of Israel's practice of State terrorism and of its defiance of the will of the international community as expressed in its opposition to the kind of piracy in question and its constant efforts to combat such policies.

2. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic strongly objects to the deletion of items 5 and 23, relating to the Palestine question and the Middle East problem. These items are of the utmost importance, particularly when the new Israeli Government is acting in defiance of the resolutions of the United Nations, the principle of land for peace and the will of the international community, because the issue as a whole falls within the purview of the Security Council in the context of its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

3. It is truly regrettable that the Security Council, which bears special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, should see fit to delete these items without heed for their objective and historical value and without prior consultation with the States concerned. We believe that this is entirely incompatible with the transparency we have all agreed to pursue in all United Nations organs as a matter of principle.

96-21998 (E) 270896 270896 280896

/...

4. The retention of an item for a period of only one year if a Member of the United Nations should object to its deletion before 15 September 1996 is a norm that is unacceptable. It has been introduced without prior consultation with Member States, and it imposes on them a fait accompli in whose creation they did not participate and with regard to which they were not consulted.

5. The automatic deletion of items that have not been given formal consideration in the preceding five years shows an alarming disregard for the best way for the Council to consider certain issues and, in particular, for the timing of such consideration. It might motivate some States to insist on raising issues that would otherwise be deleted from the list of matters of which the Security Council is seized, and this might be a disservice to the work of the Council.

Lastly, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic believes that the tasks before the Security Council are much greater than any mere endeavour to simplify the list of matters of which it is seized, and it requests the Council to reconsider its decision in the interests of international peace and security.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ahmad HALLAK
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/696
27 August 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 22 AUGUST 1996 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 22 August 1996, which I have received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

I would appreciate your bringing it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI

96-21987 (E) 280896 290896

/...

Annex

Letter dated 22 August 1996 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1031, I attach the ninth report on IFOR operations. I would appreciate your making this report available to the UN Security Council.

We are fast approaching the most sensitive part of the implementation of the Peace Accord, the elections in mid-September. It was for this reason that I visited Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the SACEUR, a few days ago. We wanted to inform ourselves at first hand in this critical period leading up to the elections. This is now the time for Bosnia and Herzegovina to consolidate the peace that IFOR has brought. Elections must take place on time and it is now up to the Parties to do their part to ensure that they are free and fair.

Notwithstanding the reaffirmation that we received from all the Parties during our visit of their commitment to comply with the Peace Accord and to help ensure a free and fair election environment, we still have concerns as to the continued incidents of harassment and intimidation and the obstruction to freedom of movement and freedom to return to homes of origin. Moreover, we still see continued tension within the Federation, although the agreement to abolish Herzog-Bosna is welcome news. Lastly, there have been some worrying indications of an intention to restrict IFOR inspection access and thus violate compliance requirements. There is no doubt, however, that IFOR's reaction in standing firm has helped overcome this problem, notably in the incident at Han Pijesak mentioned in paragraph 6 of the report.

In this last report before the elections, let me assure you that IFOR will continue to provide general security and substantial logistic support, especially to the OSCE and the IPTF. But the attitude of the Parties will remain crucial to preventing civil disturbances and voter harassment.

(Signed) Javier SOLANA

Appendix

Ninth Report to the UN Security Council on IFOR Operations

IFOR Operations

1. The multinational implementation force (IFOR) comprises approximately 53,000 personnel deployed in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, from all the NATO nations and from 16 non-NATO contributors. Currently IFOR is being restructured with forces that are more appropriate for the tasks required of it during the remainder of its mission. Mobile units, better suited to the increasing task of patrolling, are replacing some of the original, heavier armoured units. Overall, the current force levels will be maintained until after the elections in September and IFOR's overall capability will be retained until December, when its mandate comes to an end. Preparations are underway to streamline the IFOR command structure in preparation for the completion of its mission at the end of the year.

2. IFOR air assets continue to provide the capability required to secure the air space, defend and support IFOR ground forces, provide support to civilian agencies within mission capabilities, and to monitor compliance. Since the last report, a Memorandum of Agreement with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) on the establishment of a 'restricted operating zone' to allow for IFOR close air support training flights, has been signed. As a result, IFOR has initiated regular, coordinated close air support training missions over Eastern Slavonia, to exercise plans to provide close air support, if required, to the UN Transitional Authority in East Slavonia (UNTAES). IFOR maritime assets also remain deployed in support of IFOR.

3. Throughout the reporting period, IFOR has continued to carry out its primary task of implementing the military aspects of the Peace Agreement, including the inspection and verification of barracks/cantonments and air defence weapons storage sites. IFOR has also continued to carry out such secondary tasks as supporting the UN International Police Task Force (IPTF) in their operations to ensure civilian Freedom of Movement. Ground and aerial patrols of the Inter-Entity Boundary Line (IEBL) and the Zone of Separation (ZOS) have been maintained, as has the monitoring of de-mining operations. Plans to support an emergency withdrawal of the UNTAES force remain in place.

4. Mines still pose the greatest risk to IFOR and others. In addition, occasional threats have been directed against IFOR and the IPTF, and recently some incidents have occurred, but IFOR maintains and has used its robust capabilities and Rules of Engagement to enable it to defend itself and the IPTF effectively and to provide protection for others involved in implementing the Peace Agreement. A recent adaptation to the IFOR Operations Plan has further enhanced the basis for close cooperation and security coverage between IFOR and the IPTF.

5. Progress continues to be made in opening up the country by the improvement of the country's infrastructure, such as the repair of roads, bridges and railroads, together with efforts to open airports to commercial

traffic. After being closed for four years, Sarajevo International Airport has reopened to civilian air traffic from 15th August. Supported by an appropriate information campaign, patrolling continues throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to enhance freedom of movement and to remove obstacles, where these are found. However, while the number of illegal checkpoints is low, civilian freedom of movement is limited and the Parties themselves have still to create a climate of public confidence in which people can move freely and return to their homes of origin.

Cooperation and Compliance by the Parties

6. Progress continues with demobilization and most of the forces and heavy weapons of the former warring factions have been placed in cantonments. While the overall trend remains positive, there were a series of incidents during the reporting period which raised concern about full compliance with the military aspects of the Peace Agreement. IFOR continues to discover undeclared weapons and ordnance and these are being disposed of, as necessary, in line with COMIFOR's stated policy. IFOR was also denied access to a VRS facility at Han Pijesak. This was resolved through intervention with Republika Srpska political authorities, but not before the publicised IFOR preparations under Operation FEAR NAUGHT had been implemented. IFOR will continue to carry out inspections of the military facilities of all Parties at times, and under conditions, of its own choosing, in accordance with the provisions of the Peace Agreement. IFOR's role in ensuring that all Parties adhere to the military obligations contained in the Peace Agreement remains a priority task.

7. While the creation of UNHCR bus routes over the IEBL has met with some success, an area of great concern remains that of civilian FOM and, especially, freedom of return of displaced persons and refugees. All Parties continue to place obstacles to these freedoms by the construction of unauthorized checkpoints and the use of intimidation to expel minorities.

8. Organised Foreign Forces have been withdrawn from Bosnia and Herzegovina, although a limited number of individuals still remain. Separately, it appears that all prisoners of war, for whom the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) have determined that there is insufficient evidence to warrant further detention, have been released, but there does remain substantial evidence indicating that the Parties continue to detain prisoners who have not been registered by the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC).

Cooperation with the High Representative, the OSCE, and other International Organisations

9. Within its capabilities and subject to the fulfilment of its primary military mission, IFOR continues to develop its support to the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Peace Agreement, including the maintenance of a secure environment in which civil organizations can operate. IFOR is currently providing priority support to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in preparing the elections on 14th September, particularly in such areas as planning, logistics and communications. IFOR will also work closely with the OSCE, IPTF and the Parties to provide a secure environment for the

elections, including through the concentration of forces at potential points of confrontation. IFOR is also working with the OHR and OSCE to determine how it can best contribute to the establishment of common institutions following the elections.

10. IFOR continues to work closely with the UNHCR in its efforts to promote the repatriation of refugees and return of displaced persons. For returns to majority areas, IFOR is cooperating with the UNHCR, who is focusing on its 23 target areas. For returns to minority areas, IFOR is supporting UNHCR and the UN IPTF in facilitating movement of groups across the IEBL, and supporting as required the UNHCR inter-entity bus service.

11. IFOR continues to share information with OSCE Personal Representative General Vigleik Eide in support of his work on the implementation of the Agreement on sub-regional arms control. In particular, IFOR is sharing all reliable data it obtains on weapons holdings inside Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to encourage the effective implementation of this agreement.

12. IFOR continues to support the ICTY, in particular by carrying out extensive aerial and ground surveillance of alleged mass grave sites to which ICTY has given priority status. IFOR also continues to provide security and logistical support to ICTY teams investigating alleged mass grave sites in the Srebrenica area.

UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/697
27 August 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 26 AUGUST 1996 FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO RESOLUTION 918 (1994) CONCERNING RWANDA ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to refer to resolution 1011 (1995), adopted by the Security Council on 16 August 1995, regarding the situation in Rwanda. By paragraph 11 of that resolution, the Committee is required to report to the Council on notifications received from States on the export of arms and related matériel to Rwanda, as well as notifications of imports of arms and related matériel made by the Government of Rwanda.

Accordingly, I wish to inform you that the Committee established pursuant to resolution 918 (1994) concerning Rwanda has received the following notification:

On 21 August 1996, from the Government of Singapore for the export of spare parts for vehicles from the Tata Engineering Services (Pte) Ltd. (a Singapore company) to Rwanda through the entry point of Rusumo, Rwanda, via the port of Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania. The total value of the shipment is f.o.b. US$ 155,355.12.

(Signed) Nugroho WISNUMURTI
Chairman
Security Council Committee established
pursuant to resolution 918 (1994)
concerning Rwanda

96-22052 (E) 270896 280896